(b) to (d) Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government. No assessment has been made on the whole impact of these services on the overall prosperity of the region.

Arrangements to tackle fog

110. SHRI B. J. PANDA:
MS. MABEL REBELLO:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the aviation industry has worked out some measures to tackle fog problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the airlines have developed some standby arrangements for passengers due to cancelled or delayed flights; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Assessment of aerodrome operators' and airlines preparation to tackle the situation at airports due to fog is reviewed prior to the setting of winter season which include training of pilots, timely information to passengers, amenities, etc. CAT III B landing system has been installed at Delhi Airport including at new runway. Advanced Surface Movement Guidance and Control System have also been installed at Delhi airport.

(c) and (d) Various steps are taken by the airlines regarding arrangements for passengers due to cancellation/delayed flights such 'as advance information to passengers about rescheduling of flights due to fog. In case of cancellation, passengers are given option to either take full refund or avail next available flight. In case of delay beyond two hours, light refreshment is also being provided to the passengers.

Luggage theft at airports

111. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of complaints have been received by Government from passengers regarding theft of their belongings at the airports;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on their complaints;

(c) whether it is a fact that some employees of various airlines have been found guilty of stealing passengers' belongings;

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereon;

(e) whether Government has taken the matter with the concerned airlines to ensure the responsibility of the airlines and also that such incidents of theft do not happen in future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (f) Complaints are received from passengers on various issues including theft of baggage. The complaints as and when received are taken up with the airlines for redressal and necessary action. Some cases are registered with the police depending on the gravity of the case.

To curb the baggage theft, the Government/airlines have taken the following steps which *inter-alia* are as under:-

(i) Instructions have been issued to all concerned that all personnel working with Ground Handling Agents shall be searched by airport security personnel at the Gates while leaving airport;

(ii) Surveillance is kept by CISF manually and through CCTV cameras at all major airports. Installation of CCTV is under process at other smaller airports;

(iii) Vigilance at airports has been enhanced;

(iv) Loading/unloading of checked-in baggage is being done under supervision of security/Airport services staff;

(v) Automated Baggage Reconciliation system installed at metros to reduce instances of such mishandlings;

(vi) Extensive training imparted to ramp staff (especially loaders) on baggage handling;

(vii) Establishment of dedicated baggage handling units at Metros; and

(viii) Tally sheet implemented for each flight by some airlines which is handled by well trained staff.

In case of lost baggages, scheduled domestic airlines also provide compensation to passengers as per company policy.

Retrenchment of aviation staff

112. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any decision or proposal to lay off 15,000 staff for 5 years in Air India;

(b) whether there is any investigations, declared in the subject of funding sources of Jet Airways which appears to have a major role in the so called crisis faced by M/s. Jet Airways; and

(c) whether there is any decision to join hands of Air India with cartel formed by the private airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.